WightFibre full-fibre broadband now available to 57,000 premises on the Isle of Wight

Submitted by: WightFibre
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UK government's funding helping to extend broadband coverage to rural and hard-to-reach places.

Cowes, Isle of Wight, 08 Aug 2023:

WightFibre today announced 57,000 premises on the Isle of Wight can now receive its full-fibre broadband service. Cables have already been laid to a further 10,000 homes with service to those homes scheduled to become available in the next eight months. This means WightFibre's Gigabit Island Project is nearing completion with over 560km of trenches dug to date out of an expected total of 600km.

To date, the UK government has allocated £10 million in funding as part of the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme for the Isle of Wight to extend coverage to 24,000 eligible premises in hard-to-reach places.

Building Digital UK (BDUK) is the UK government Executive Agency responsible for the roll out of gigabit-capable broadband in hard-to-reach areas of the UK. BDUK Chair Simon Blagden and Isle of Wight MP Bob Seely visited WightFibre in Totland Bay and Freshwater Bay on the Isle of Wight to see some of the areas that have benefitted from voucher funding.

John Irvine, CEO of WightFibre, said, "We are delighted to welcome Simon Blagden to the Island to show off our great progress to date.

Our new full-fibre, future-proof network is second to none on the planet and this, coupled with our very high levels of customer care, is giving customers what they want – fast reliable broadband that just works."

Thanks to the government's Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme, WightFibre's Gigabit Island Project is already underway in harder-to-reach places on the Island all of which have voucher eligible premises. This includes Haven Street, Wroxhall, Chale, and Mottistone. Service recently became available in Totland Bay, Freshwater Bay, Bembridge, Whitwell, Alverstone and St Helens.

Minister for Data and Digital Infrastructure Sir John Whittingdale said:
"Having a fast, reliable internet connection is vital for everything from staying in touch with friends and family to growing a local business. That's why levelling up connectivity and delivering high-speed broadband to underserved areas is one of our top priorities.

"I'm delighted tens of thousands of homes and businesses on the Isle of Wight will now be able to reap the benefits of high-speed connectivity, thanks to our £10 million investment in gigabit broadband vouchers."

BDUK Chair Simon Blagden said:
"We're rolling out the government's £5 billion Project Gigabit to bring lightning-fast broadband

across the UK including to the Isle of Wight. We're seeing great progress to connect hard-to-reach communities and I'm delighted to see first-hand how homes and businesses across the Island are benefiting from improved connectivity thanks to government funding."

Isle of Wight MP, Bob Seely, said, "This major achievement will be important for the Island for years to come. It will be invaluable especially for education, jobs and investment.

"As part of delivering this programme - and getting a better deal for the Island - we persuaded the Conservative Government to invest up to an additional £9 million pounds to support the fibre-to-premises plans from WightFibre. That has ensured that a much larger part of the Island can be covered than would be commercially viable.

"When we're finished, much of the Island will have some of the best connectivity and fastest broadband speeds anywhere in the world. Most rural parts of the UK won't have the fibre-to-premises as we do on the Island for many years.

"I'm delighted that Simon Blagden from the Department Science, Innovation and Technology's Building Digital UK group was here to see what that investment is delivering.

"Thank you to all the staff at WightFibre for their great work making this project happen.

"The Isle of Wight is set to be the Singapore in the Solent. Great for homes, great for business and great for learning."

The UK government's Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme (GBVS) can help people in hard-to-reach communities upgrade their broadband connections. Eligible homes and businesses can apply for up to £4,500 to cover the costs of a gigabit-capable connection.

Picture 1
Cecilia Barrett, BDUK, Councillor Karen Lucioni, Isle of Wight Council, Simon Blagden, Chair BDUK, Marcus Green, WightFibre, Bob Seely MP, Chris Newte, WightFibre, John Irvine, CEO WightFibre at WightFibre's main cabinet in Totland Bay one of the hard-to-reach localities part funded by the BDUK Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme. Photo Robin Crossley.

Picture 2
John Irvine, CEO WightFibre , Bob Seely MP, Cecilia Barrett, BDUK, Simon Blagden, Chair BDUK and Councillor Karen Lucioni, Isle of Wight Council at WightFibre's distribution point by Freshwater Independent Lifeboat in Freshwater Bay one of the hard-to-reach localities part funded by the BDUK Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme. Photo Robin Crossley.

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Project Gigabit

Project Gigabit is the government's £5 billion programme to enable hard-to-reach communities to access lightning-fast gigabit-capable broadband. It targets homes and businesses that are not included in broadband suppliers' plans, reaching parts of the UK that might otherwise miss out on getting the digital connectivity they need.

Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme

The UK government's Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme (GBVS) can help people in hard-to-reach communities upgrade their broadband connections.

Eligible homes and businesses can apply for up to £4,500 to cover the costs of a gigabit-capable connection, up from £1,500 for homes and £3,500 for businesses previously, which enables broadband providers to reach further into rural areas where the build costs are higher.

About WightFibre.
Since 2001, WightFibre has owned and operated its' own telecommunications infrastructure entirely independently of BT Openreach. WightFibre provides phone, tv and broadband services to homes and businesses on the Isle of Wight with exceptional levels of customer service. WightFibre is the only broadband company to hold the Institute of Customer Service Servicemark with Distinction accreditation. . Only WightFibre is committed to building a full-fibre broadband network across the whole Island. WightFibre has over £110M of funding from Infracapital Partners, the government's Digital Infrastructure Investment Fund, Nat West Bank and BDUK Gigabit Voucher funding.

WightFibre offers fuss-free monthly rolling contracts with a £100 money back guarantee if headline speeds are not achieved.
www.wightfibre.com

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